

Message Text

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15 46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 SAM-01 SAB-01 SY-05

A-01 OPR-02 OC-05 SCCT-01 AID-05 OMB-01 SCS-03 SCA-01

USSS-00 EB-07 /111 W

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O R 041315Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4635

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD UNN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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CORRECTED COPY (TEXT--PARAGRAPH NUMBERING)

STUTTGART FOR ELG

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, PINT, LE, PLO

SUBJECT: BEIRUT SECURITY SITUATION DETERIORATES

REF: BEIRUT 6965

1. RELATIVELY GOOD LOCAL SECURITY SITUATION REPORTED REFTEL TOOK YET ANOTHER TURN FOR WORSE AFTERNOON JUNE 3 AND OVER-NIGHT AS CLASHES AND MORTAR/ROCKET EXCHANGES IN SEVERAL SECTIONS OF CITY FOLLOWED NEW OUTBREAK OF KIDNAPPINGS. AS OF 1030Z TODAY, FIRING WAS CONTINUING IN CHIAH QUARTER, AND GOL SECURITY OFFICIALS WERE WARNING THAT IT, AIN RUMANNEH AND HAZMIEH QUARTERS ARE "UNSAFE."

2. KIDNAPPING AT APPROX 1200Z YESTERDAY OF ANTOINE ABI NAJM, DISTRICT LEADER (HAZMIEH) OF CHAMOUN'S NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY (NLP), INTERRUPTED WHAT HAD BEEN BEIRUT'S CALMEST DAY IN TWO WEEKS. NLP AND POSSIBLY ALLIED PHALANGIST ELEMENTS RESPONDED BY SEIZING ABOUT 15 MOSLEMS ON A BUS IN HADATH, AND SITUATION IN VARIOUS PARTS OF CITY BECAME VERY TENSE. ABI NAJM WAS EVENTUALLY RELEASED UNHARMED BY 'ARAFAT (WHO WAS REPORTEDLY ALARMED AND ANNOYED TO LEARN OF HIS KIDNAPPING), FOLLOWING INTERCESSION BY SHIITE IMAM MUSA SADR, WHO APPEARS TO BE DOING YEOMAN SERVICE THESE DAYS. RUNNING LOST-AND-FOUND DEPT. FOR HOSTAGES ON ALL SIDES.

3. RESULTING LOCAL ANXIETIES WERE FULFILLED DURING NIGHT JUNE 3-4 BY RESUMPTION OF SNIPING AND HEAVY WEAPONS FIRE IN CHIAH, AIN RUMANNEH AND HAZMIEH AREAS. ACCORDING TO ONE RELIABLE REPORT, FIGHTING WAS PROVOKED BY UNIDENTIFIED ELEMENTS BASED IN SABRA/SHATILA QUARTER WHO APPARENTLY WERE TRYING TO SEIZE CONTROL OF CERTAIN POINTS WITHIN CHIAH BEFORE JOINT GOL-PLO TEAMS (REFTEL) COULD SET UP BUFFER ZONES IN THAT AREA. PHALANGIST ELEMENTS OPPOSED
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THIS EFFORT, AND SEVERE CLASH RESULTED. EFFORTS BY LEBANESE SECURITY FORCES TO RESTORE ORDER ARE CONTINUING, AND CLASHES SEEM TO HAVE ABATED SOMEWHAT. HOWEVER, POLICE REPORTEDLY SUFFERED SEVERAL CASUALTIES IN THE PROCESS. MEANWHILE, GOL HAS RELEASED FIGURES CLAIMING AT LEAST 128 DEATHS (LOW, IN OUR VIEW) AND ABOUT 300 WOUNDED AND MISSING DURING PERIOD OF PAST FIFTEEN DAYS.

4. PREMIER-DESIGNATE KARAME, WHO PUBLICLY EXPRESSED HIS IRE AT

RECRUDESCENCE OF VIOLENCE, IS CONTINUING HIS EFFORTS TO FORM CABINET AND MET WITH PRES FRANGIE AGAIN THIS MORNING. HE HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO WIN GREATER RESTRAIN FROM KAMAL JUMBLATT, WHO YESTERDAY FURTHER ESCALATED HIS ATTACKS ON PHALANGE AND AGAIN INSISTED ON LATTER'S EXCLUSION FROM NEW GOVT. IN COURSE OF HIS LATEST DIATRIBE, JUMBLATT REPEATED HIS PREVIOUS ALLEGATION (REFTEL) RE US INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANON'S CURRENT CRISIS, REFERRING ONCE AGAIN TO STATEMENT BY "SENIOR US OFFICIAL" IN SECRETARY'S PARTY AND ADDING VAGUE REFERENCES TO PAST US DELIVERIES OF ARMS" AT BEIRUT AIRPORT FOR PHALANGIST USE. PHALANGE, HE ASSERTED, IS LOGICAL EXTENSION IN LEBANON OF ISRAELI AND US INTELLIGENCE. IRAQI-BACKED DAILY BAYRUT PUBLISHED JUNE 4 MORE DETAILED ALLEGATIONS OF US AND JORDANIAN INVOLVEMENT WITH PHALANGE, QUOTING IRAQI NEWS AGENCY REPORT OF "SECRET TRIPS" BY PHALANGIST LEADERS TO MEET WITH AMB HELMS IN TEHRAN, DISPATCH OF JORDANINA "URBAN WARFARE EXPERTS" (COMPLETE WITH FAKE PHALANGE IDENTITY CARDS) TO BEIRUT, AND ATTEMPTS BY US AND ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE TO MOUNT "SCARE-PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN" AGAINST FEDAYEEN PRESENCE IN LEBANON.

5. SHIITE IMAM MUSA SADR, WHOM JUMBLATT CHARACTERIZED YESTERDAY AS PRIME MOVER IN MAY 24 "DECISION" BY ISLAMIC LEADERS TO ISOLATE PHALANGE FROM PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL POLITICS, HAS ISSUED LOW-KEY STATEMENT IN REPLY. AFTER DEPLORING EFFORTS TO DRAW RELIGIOUS LEADERS INTO POLITICAL ARENA, IMAM DENIED HE PARTICIPATED IN ANY SUCH ANTI-PHALANGIST "DECISION" AND CALLED UPON SUNNI GRAND MUFTI, WHO HOSTED MAY 24 MEETING, TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT ON WHAT TOOK PLACE. EFFECT OF IMAM'S STATEMENT IS TO BRAND JUMBLATT A LIAR.

6. RUMORS CONTINUE TO CIRCULATE RE IDENTIFY OF "THIRD PARTIES" WHO ARE TRYING TO FOMET FURTHER TROUBLES. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE HAVE RELIABLE REPORT THAT GOL SECURITY FORCES ARRESTED AT LEAST ONE PERSON IDENTIFIED AS LIBYAN AGENT ON JUNE 3, WHILE HE CONFIDENTIAL

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WAS TAKING DOWN AUTO LICENSE NUMBERS AND SURVEILLING HOMES OF VARIOUS RESIDENTS IN A PREDOMINANTLY CHRISTIAN SECTION OF BEIRUT. POSSIBLY RELATED IS JUNE 4 REPORT IN LIBYAN-BACKED DAILY, ALKIFAH AL ARABI, THAT LIBYAN GOVT. HAS PROTESTED TO GOL (LEBANESE AMB IN TRIPOLI) OVER ARREST OF LIBYAN CITIZEN HERE. GODLEY

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